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**Written Testimony in Support of House Bill 5547,
An Act Concerning the Training Curriculum
and Education of Police Officers**

Good afternoon Senator Larson, Representative Dargan, and distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee. My name is David McGuire and I am the legislative and policy director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut (ACLU-CT). I stand before you to testify in support of House Bill 5547, An Act Concerning the Training Curriculum and Education of Police Officers.

In light of recent events in Connecticut and across the country, it is time to take a hard look at how we as a state train our police forces. Today we see a lack of trust between law enforcement and the public, especially in minority communities. Tragic events in Baltimore, Maryland and Ferguson, Missouri have sparked a national discussion on how to reform the culture and how to implement policies and practices to help police better serve their communities. In this vein, last year the Connecticut General Assembly passed a widely praised excessive force law. House Bill 5547 would be a meaningful and logical next step towards ensuring that our police forces in Connecticut are getting the training and education necessary to keep themselves and the public safe. We are confident that the Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy at Central Connecticut State University will conduct a thorough assessment and make sound recommendations regarding how to ensure that Connecticut police are getting training consistent with recognized national best practices.

It is undeniable that some people view the police as the enemy after several recent high profile excessive force cases across the country. This accusation could not be farther from the truth. We acknowledge the hard work done by police in Connecticut and we urge them to support this bill. Not only will this legislation look at ways to improve police training, it will also improve the public image of law enforcement in Connecticut. Seeing law enforcement officials supporting measures to study and improve police training will boost the public's confidence in police.

Please support this legislation and ensure that our police officers have the best possible training and to help improve the public's perception of law enforcement.